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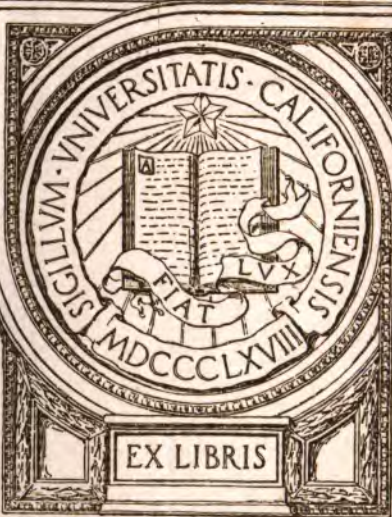
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# THE NEW CITIZEN



# A METHOD OF TEACHING ENGLISH TO FOREIGNERS

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Cornell University for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY  
GEORGE ELMORE REAMAN



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# THE NEW CITIZEN



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## Modern Language Instruction: A Method of Teaching English to Foreigners.

### CHAPTER I.

#### PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF MODERN LANGUAGE STUDY AND INSTRUCTION.

##### *The Problem:*

To find a method by means of which adult foreigners may secure a working-knowledge of English with a minimum of time and effort. By "working knowledge" is meant enough English to make one's wants known and to be able to follow directions, whether spoken or written.

##### *The Procedure:*

(1) A study of the origin of language in order to understand something of its underlying principles.

(2) A study of the deaf and dumb language and of the sign language of Indians in order to learn the basis of their non-vocal means of communication.

(3) A study of the methods that foreigners usually employ in making their wants known before they are able to speak our language.

(4) A study of the two most popular methods in use at the present time—(a) the Roberts method and (b) the Goldberger method—in order to determine what principles they employ.

(5) A study of current methods employed in teaching other foreign languages.

(6) A comparison and critical study of the foregoing results in the elaboration of a method to solve our problem in a manner both psychologically and pedagogically sound.

In limiting the method to one that will give a "working-knowledge" only, we are justified by the fact that the type of foreigners with which we are dealing does not want training in linguistics; this, for two very evident reasons: first, many of them have had linguistic training in their own languages before coming to this country; and, secondly, to afford a linguistic training would require more time and application than these foreigners are able to give, even were it necessary. Hence the foreigner either learns English rather quickly and readily, or not at all. Yet it is highly desirable that the foreigner should become economically independent in the shortest possible time. So long as he is unable to make himself understood in English he is dependent upon unscrupulous interpreters and is at the mercy of political "bosses". Furthermore he can never become a satisfactory citizen until he knows the language of his adopted country.

The object of studying the origin of language in connection with the development of a satisfactory method of instruction is to find, as it were, the material—the "back-bone"—out of which language has been made, so that we may learn, if possible, what parts can most readily be dispensed with, and what parts are most essential. For instance, philology shows us that our connectional words are of comparatively recent origin. Wundt<sup>1</sup> tells us that language did not sprout and then branch out but that its growth has been a process of agglomeration and agglutination. If we can determine how language began, we can, perhaps, infer its essential core; those parts of a language which cannot be dispensed with in conveying an idea. Such inferences should also suggest a means of giving the foreigner the simplest possible "tools" for conveying his thoughts. Tucker agrees with this procedure when he says:

<sup>1</sup>Wundt, W.: *Element der Völkerpsychologie*, 2nd edition. Leipzig 1913, p. 69.



“ . . . they (the foreigners) are in a position somewhat analogous to that of early mankind, when language was first struggling to express a thought by means of its very limited material. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the analogy applies to the devices adopted . . . .”<sup>1</sup>

Second, with regard to a study of sign language Wundt says: “Deaf mutes, though of different nationalities, can make themselves understood without difficulty, even upon meeting for the first time.”<sup>2</sup> If this is the case, foreigners who have sight and hearing might employ the same principles with advantage. Moreover all language is governed by two principles: ease of expression and ease of apprehension; hence the deaf and dumb, with their limited capacities for conveying thought, will doubtless evolve a system which incorporates these principles to the largest possible extent. Mallery<sup>3</sup> and Ernest Thompson Seton<sup>4</sup> in speaking of the sign language among the Indians says that it is based upon the same principles that underlie the language of the deaf and dumb. We may therefore apply these principles in devising a method of teaching English to foreigners with assurance both as to their simplicity and their practicability.

Third, an observation of the methods used by foreigners who speak no English in making their wants known, should furnish some insight into the most habitual and instinctive ways of communication. Foreigners are often in the position of the pupil whose response is, “I know it but I just can’t tell it”. If we can but find a method to facilitate natural and more or less universal modes of expression, we should be able to render the foreigner great assistance.

<sup>1</sup>Tucker, T. H.: *Natural History of Language*. London, Blackie & Son, 1908, p. 428.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid*, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup>Mallery, Garrick: *Bureau of Ethnology. Sign Language Among North American Indians*. 1st Annual Report 1881, p. 361.

<sup>4</sup>Ernest Thompson Seton: *Sign Talk*. New York, Doubleday, Page & Company. Introduction 1918.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE AND WHAT IT TEACHES.

Let us now consider in turn each of these first three types of inquiry as an introduction to our thesis, which will be developed in the three following sections.

In approaching the study of the origin of language we meet with a great diversity of opinion regarding it. The issues are such that we can not attempt to reach any definite conclusion, but for our purpose it is not necessary to accept a precise theory of the genesis of language, for among the various theories propounded, such as the "bow-wow", the "pooh-pooh", the "ding-dong", the "gee-haw", the "goo-goo", etc., each contains a measure of truth. Concerning the "relation between language and thought," writes Whitney, there are "two parties—one maintaining that there is an actual identity between speech and thought or reason; while the other side maintains that language is only the assistant of reason and instrument of thought."<sup>1</sup> On this question Wundt says that both reason and speech have come into existence with one another and through one another and the question whether reason or speech was earlier has as little significance as the celebrated conundrum—whether the egg or the hen was earlier.<sup>2</sup> Since reason functions only through the communication of ideas, that is, through language, primitive man must first have had a capacity for making sounds. It would seem, therefore, to quote another work on this subject,

<sup>1</sup>Whitney, W. D.: *Oriental and Linguistic Studies*, New York 1893, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup>Wundt, W.: *Völkerpsychologie: die Sprache*. 2nd Edition, Leipzig 1904. Vol. II, p. 617.

“that as far as we can judge, the original creations of language must have consisted in words expressive of emotion on the one hand and of sounds on the other—strictly speaking, however, the only absolutely certain original creations are interjections.”<sup>1</sup> No more than modern man could primitive man have reasoned without relating two things or objects together, and only as he considered objects about him could their attributes have been brought to his attention. “To me”, says Oertel, “it would seem much more likely that a sound complex first attached itself to the compound percept of an object, and that only later it came to signify also a prominent element of this compound; so that the Indo-European word for ‘horse’ did not originally mean ‘swift’ and was then used for ‘horse’, but that it originally meant ‘horse’ and the meaning ‘swift’ was a later development, the quality being expressed by the word for the object which possessed the quality in a marked degree.”<sup>2</sup>

Some investigators, such as Noiré,<sup>3</sup> have claimed that the first words could be determined by philologists, but outstanding men like Whitney<sup>4</sup>, Greenough and Kittredge<sup>5</sup>, disclaim this ability; for Whitney says, “It is not a question of comparative philology but of linguistic philosophy.” All agree that language began with simple roots, though these are not parts of speech. Sayce is quite positive on this point: “The root will be a sentence word, summing up in one whole what a later stage of language would break up into separate words

<sup>1</sup>Strong, H. O., Logeman, W. S., Wheeler, B.: Introduction to the Study of the History of Languages. London, 1891, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup>Oertel, Hams: Lectures on the Study of Language, New York, 1901, p. 306.

<sup>3</sup>Noiré, Ludwig: The Origin of Language, Chicago, Open Court Publishing Company, 2nd Edition, 1917, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit. p. 280.

<sup>5</sup>Greenough, J. P. and Kittredge, G. L.: Words and Their Ways in English Speech. New York, 1901. Appendix.

or forms, the name of an individual object implying and including subject or object and 'verb' as well."<sup>1</sup>

This conclusion is really applicable to the foreigner who is trying to make himself understood; not in what we call good English but in the broken English by which he is barely able to convey his meaning. For instance, a foreigner goes into a store and says the word "knife". He does not need to say "I want a knife"; for the situation supplies the context. In his utterance, "knife" becomes a sentence word "including subject or object and 'verb' as well."

The operations of reasoning consist in the relating of object with object; for it is in this way that thoughts are created in the mind. It has been stated that "there is nothing in mind which was not previously in the senses." If this be true the names of things must have formed the basis of our language. Buschmann, after an exhaustive study of the words for "mother" and "father" in many languages had to say on this point: "I rejoice in the fact that what I here develop gives unmistakable proof of the primitiveness of nouns, although a systematizing speech philosophy in later times has laid down the proposition with commanding definiteness—that the roots of language must be verbs, all other parts of speech, namely, the noun and adjective, being derived words."<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that there can be no action as expressed by a verb without something which acts upon something else. Mallery in comparing the sign language of the North American Indians with the language of deaf mutes which it so closely resembles, says: "Inversion by which the object is placed before the action is a striking feature of the language of deaf-mutes and it appears to be the natural method by

<sup>1</sup>Sayce, A. H.: *Principles of Comparative Philology*, London 1875, 2nd Edition, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup>Buschman, J. C.: *Über den Naturlaut*, Berlin, 1853, p. 31.

which objects and actions enter into the mental conception. In striking a rock the natural conception is not first of the abstract idea of striking or of sending a stroke into vacancy, seeing nothing and having no intention of striking anything in particular, when suddenly a rock rises up to the mental vision and receives the blow; the order is that man sees the rock, has the intention to strike it and does so; therefore he gestures, 'I rock strike' . . . . These are undoubtedly the successive steps that an artist would take in drawing the picture, or rather successive pictures, to illustrate the story."<sup>1</sup> The thought processes of primitive man must have been similar to our own. Though they may have been less complicated, yet in the simple situation described above it is not difficult to reconstruct the process by an analogy with our own mode of procedure.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 361.

### CHAPTER III.

#### GESTURE LANGUAGE: EASE OF EXPRESSION AND APPREHENSION.

Gesture language if it did not precede oral language must have at least been co-existent with it. Wundt writes: "The significant thing about primitive speech is therefore not the sound itself but the sound-gesture, the movement of the organs of articulation which, like other gesture-movements now appears as demonstrative, now as imitative and in accompanying the play of gesture of the hands and of the rest of the body, really adds itself only as a peculiar kind of mimetic movement to the total expression of the feelings and ideas."<sup>1</sup> It is a well-known fact that primitive peoples use gesture much more than do civilized peoples; hence we infer that gesture-language may be even older than sound-language. Whether or not this be so the fact that the gesture is a primitive mode of conveying ideas is sufficient for our purpose; and there are some things about gesture language which have an interesting bearing upon our problem. For instance, Wundt relates that there is a remarkable resemblance between the gesture language of the deaf-mutes of Europe, and that of the Dakota Indians. He goes on to say, "This mode of communication is not the result of intellectual reflections or conscious purposes, but of emotions and the involuntary expressive movements that accompany emotion . . . . As is well-known, it is not only emotion that is reflected in one's movements, particularly in mimetic movements of the face, but also ideas . . . . All elements of this language are perceptible to the senses, and therefore immediately intelligible. . . . This

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit. "Elemente", p. 62.

intelligibility of gesture-language, however, rests upon the fact that the signs it employs or, translated into the terminology of spoken language, its words are direct representations of the objects, the qualities, or the events referred to.”<sup>1</sup> Continuing he says, that if the thing is present it is pointed to and if not present the gestures become graphic. Gesture-language would translate ‘a good man’ by ‘a man good’, and in the case of verb plus object, the object would naturally come first.

Since gesture-language is comparable with language of such primitive tribes as those of the Soudan, where no grammatical categories are employed, it is important to note that in these languages a definite word-order is always observed; the order being that in which the objects are perceived. “Moreover just as primitive language has no specific means for expressing a verb, so also are change and action overshadowed in primitive thought by the concrete image. The thinking itself, therefore, may be called *concrete*. Primitive man sees the image with its separate parts; and, as he sees it, so he reproduces it in his language. . . . image follows upon image in the order in which these appear to consciousness. Thus the thinking of primitive man is almost exclusively associative.”<sup>2</sup> In every case the content is of a sense-perceptual and not of a conceptual nature. “The most important characteristic of gesture language, as well as the most distinctive feature of an original language, is the fact that there is no trace of abstract concepts, there being merely perceptual representations and yet some of these representations—and this is proof of how insistently human thought, even in its beginnings, presses on the formation of concepts—have acquired a symbolic meaning by virtue of which they become sensuous means, in a certain sense, of expressing concepts which in themselves are not of a perceptual

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., “Elemente”, pp. 60 and 61.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., “Elemente”, p. 73.



nature. We may here mention only *one* such gesture, noteworthy because it occurs independently in the language of the European deaf and dumb and in that of the Dakota Indians. 'Truth' is represented by moving the index finger directly forward from the lips, while 'lie' is indicated by a movement towards the right or left."<sup>1</sup> Throughout his work on language Wundt stresses the concrete and the names of things as the basis not only of primitive language but of all gesture-language as well, while Tylor states that, 'Next to studying the gesture-language among the deaf and dumb, the most perfect way of making out its principles is in its use by people who can talk but do not understand one another's language.'<sup>2</sup> He has reference here to the sign-language of the American Indians, and he follows the same line of argument employed by Wundt. In his reference to "people who can talk but do not understand one another's language" we see the application to our problem of teaching English to foreigners. G. Lambrecht<sup>3</sup> likewise agrees with Wundt that oral language as primitive man began it, and the gesture-language either of primitive man or the deaf-mutes, are alike built upon the same principles.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., "Elemente", pp. 63

<sup>2</sup>Tylor, E. B.: Anthropology, New York, 1889, p. 118.

<sup>3</sup>Lambrecht, G.: La Notion de "Völkerpsychologie" Institut Supérieure de Philosophie Louvain, Annales Tom. 2, 1913.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FOREIGNER'S METHODS: EMPHÁSIS ON THE CONCRETE.

We may now consider the method that the foreigner himself uses. Tucker tells us, "It is worth while also to observe the manner in which persons who are foreigners to each other, starting with reciprocally unintelligible languages make their first attempts at communicating thought. The 'pidgin' speech which is first developed regularly consists of the chief meaning words, accompanied by some demonstrative words and by gestures, but without grammar. It distinctly recalls a 'baby language'. The speakers in such circumstances are not ignorant of the grammatical devices of their own respective tongues. These devices have, however, been inherited by them, while in respect of developing 'pidgin' they are placed in the position of inventors."<sup>1</sup> Here again we find the emphasis put on the name of the object and anyone who has observed foreigners trying to make their wants known will recall how the object is either pointed out if it be in sight or else graphically described, when it is not in view. To sum up, it appears that with primitive man, with deaf and dumb people, with Indians who use a sign language, and with foreigners themselves, the 'core' or basis of their method of conveying ideas has been and is the noun. With primitive man this noun had probably the force of a sentence-word, whether it was by intention a proper noun or name, as Adam Smith, Condillac and Locke have believed, or a more general reference as Leibnitz has asserted, it is not necessary for us to decide. In either case our conclusion holds that any method

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 428.

devised to teach English to foreigners should be based or built upon the use of the noun in preference to the verb.

The question may now be asked why so much time has been spent attempting to prove the priority of the noun in the development of language and its prominence in gesture-language, for to many it may seem quite obvious that this would be the case, and that any method devised for teaching English to foreigners must employ this principle. Yet what may be perfectly obvious as a principle is not always feasible as a method.

The committee appointed at the National Americanization Conference held in Washington in May, 1919, to investigate the best method of teaching English to foreigners suggested the following principles governing the teaching process:

"Emphasis is laid on the use of the verb, and the following devices are suggested for the use of the teacher:

- (1) Dramatization.
  - (a) Action.
  - (b) Gesture.
  - (c) Play of features and inflection of voice.
- (2) Object.
- (3) Pictures."<sup>1</sup>

We shall discuss these principles later, but attention may here be drawn to the fact that as late as 1919 a committee appointed by the members of the National Conference on Americanization gave preference to the verb over the noun.

Since two members of this committee—H. H. Goldberger, Principal of Public School No. 18, New York City, and Peter Roberts, Secretary, Industrial Department, International Committee, Y.M.C.A.—have each published text-books based upon the verb as nucleus in the teaching of English to foreigners,

<sup>1</sup>Americanization: Vol. 2, No. 2, Oct. 1, 1919, p. 13.

it will be evident that a verb-method of instruction is not without its supporters. We must therefore analyze the methods set forth in these two books, for it will be necessary to defend our thesis of the noun as being the more natural and appropriate basis of instruction.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FALLACY OF THE ROBERTS' METHOD OF INSTRUCTION.

Let us consider the Roberts' book first—"English for Coming-Americans." Roberts employs three guiding principles; the first of which is as follows:

"Trust the ear, the receptive organ of language. The eye can aid and so can the hand, but it is contrary to nature to try to learn a language by those senses. The pupil must not see a word before he knows how to pronounce it; he must not write it until he can reproduce it *viva voce*.<sup>1</sup>

It would appear from this that a language may be acquired by listening. Once a language is understood, one can indeed "trust the ear" but the difficulty in teaching a foreigner is that he doesn't understand. He may listen and hear sounds but they are meaningless to him. Another serious drawback is that all persons do not hear equally well. Each person has his own speech pattern whose genius resides in his native tongue. English people always think that foreigners speak very rapidly while the latter in turn consider English to be a hissing language. A Frenchman is accustomed to end each syllable in a vowel, while the syllables of the English language frequently end in a consonant. Thus the Frenchman has a different speech pattern from the Englishman, and quite unconsciously he listens for the syllables to end with a vowel-sound. The foreigner, unless he understands what the word or sentence means, can hear but a jumble of sounds, and where there is no meaning, there can be no perception. It is evident

<sup>1</sup>Roberts, Peter: English for Coming-Americans. New York, International Y.M.C.A. Press, 1909, p. 18.

that if we are to "trust the ear" understanding must accompany the sounds or they will remain unintelligible.

The inference by which Roberts reaches his conclusion that the verb is nuclear in the study of a new mode of speech also involves a fallacy. To quote: "Did you ever see a child learning its mother tongue from a book? Did you use a book when you learned to speak?"<sup>1</sup> These oratorical questions are intended to support the direct method of teaching language with which we have no quarrel in principle; but the direct method may be variously employed, and Roberts draws an analogy between the child learning to speak and the foreigner learning a new language, which is not warranted when the two situations are compared closely. The child learns to talk because he must express himself; and as his intelligence develops with the number of different things he learns to relate, sounds, which were formerly unintelligible, take on meaning as soon as he can associate them with the things he is experiencing. But the child has none of the inhibitions that arise from thinking in one way and trying to express oneself in quite another way. Contrast the child with the adult foreigner who has been educated to think in certain patterns and who in learning a new language must adopt a new set of adjustments to express his thought, for here lies the adult's chief difficulty. On this point Wundt writes as follows, "Many analogues to the formal characteristics of primitive thought revealed in these linguistic phenomena may be met in child-language. There is a wide divergence, however, with respect to the very element which has already disappeared, with the exception of slight traces, from the language of primitive peoples. I refer to the close correlation of sound and meaning. As regards this feature child-language is much more similar to gesture-language than is possible in the case of forms of

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 9.

speech that have undergone a long historical development. For child language, like gesture language, is in a certain sense, continually being created anew. Of course, it is not created, as people sometimes consider, by the children themselves. It is a conventionalized language of the mothers and nurses who converse with the child, supplemented, in part, by the child's associates along the lines of these traditional models. The sound-complexes signifying animals, 'bow-wow' for the dog, 'hott-hott' for the horse, 'tuk-tuk' for the chicken, etc., as also 'papa' and 'mamma' for father and mother, are sounds that are in some way fitted to the meaning and at the same time resemble so far as possible the babbling sounds of the child. But this entire process is instituted by the child's associates and is at most supplemented by the child himself to the extent of a few incidental elements. For this reason, child-language has relatively little to teach us concerning the development of speaking and thinking; those psychologists and teachers who believe that it affords an important source of information concerning the origin of thought are in error. Such information can be gained only from those modes of expressing thought, which, like the spoken languages of primitive peoples, have retained, in their essential characteristics, primitive modes of thinking. Even in these cases it is only the *forms* of thought that are thus discoverable. The content, as is implied by the formal characteristics themselves is, of course, also of a sense-perceptual, not a conceptual, nature."<sup>1</sup> Because children learn their language by ear and without a book is no adequate reason for supposing that adult foreigners should be taught in a similar manner. As suggested above, children learn by hearing when they associate sounds with known objects as these are pointed out to them. To say "it is contrary to nature to try to learn a lan-

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit. "Elemente", pp. 73-74. Schaub's translation.



guage by means of the eye and hand", is just as unreasonable as to say that one can learn a language by the ear alone—indeed it is more so, because the deaf and dumb are better able to use language to convey ideas than is a blind and dumb person. Helen Keller is considered remarkable, yet we do not think it at all wonderful that the deaf and dumb should be able to talk to each other by gesture language. To emphasize the use of the ear alone is objectionable because lack of correlation with other sense-receptors is undesirable. To depend upon the ear alone would lead the foreigner to repeat his words parrot-fashion, and one can then have no guarantee that he understands what he is repeating so glibly. Furthermore, it is quite as essential for him to learn to read and comprehend the written word, as it is for him to speak.

Roberts' second principle of using and teaching primarily that language which the foreigner most needs is entirely acceptable. If we are to educate we must begin with the learner's experience and work from that; for only in that way can he participate intelligently in his training.

The third principle is "that the minds of all men operate in accordance with the same natural laws. The lessons should follow these laws as faithfully as possible, for thus we hope to relieve the tension and enable the student to concentrate his attention upon getting pronunciation and correct enunciation."<sup>1</sup> In explanation of this he says, "If the lessons in their make-up are true to natural law they will be easily remembered, not only by the American but also by every other human being."<sup>2</sup> This principle is of more doubtful validity; for while at birth it may be admitted that all minds operate in accordance with the same natural law, yet training has a great deal to do with man's later habits of thought.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 16.

The man from China or Japan who is accustomed to reading up and down is going to find more difficulty with the mere mechanics of English reading than would, say, an Italian who is accustomed to reading from left to right. Throughout his arguments Roberts fails to recognize that the foreigner is making or rather remaking his habits, and that this is a much more difficult thing than the acquisition of a new habit.

So much for Roberts' principles; let us see how they are worked out. His course of instruction is divided into thirty lessons, presented in leaflet form, ten known as the Domestic Series, ten known as the Industrial Series, and ten known as the Commercial Series. A set of large manilla charts (24" x 36") is also employed in the Domestic Series, and for the reading exercise and review practice.

The words and phrases of the first ten lessons pertain to the sphere of the home. The topic of the first lesson is "Getting up in the morning", arranged in the following fashion :

Awake: I wake from sleep.

Open: I open my eyes.

Look: I look for my watch.

See: I see what time it is.

Is: It is six o'clock.

Must get up: I must get up.

The teacher is supposed to illustrate by gesture the meaning of the above sentences, and so far as possible to bring into the room the objects of which he is speaking. To quote Roberts again: "You have observed that the verb in each sentence is placed on the left of the sentence. It is set there for a purpose. We believe that its importance in the sentence justifies the emphasis . . .

"Mark the part of speech with which they experience greatest difficulty and you will find that it is the verb. Here

they stumble oftenest. They get the noun and adjectives with comparative ease, but the moods and tenses of the verbs, the use of the auxiliaries, perplexes them and gives them considerable difficulty. That is: that part of speech which plays the most important role in every sentence is least mastered by foreigners. They stumble in the use of the verb, which is the soul of the sentence and plays the leading part in all conversation. Are we not then justified in emphasizing it; in making it the key to every sentence . . . ?"<sup>1</sup>

We have at last come to the very crux of the whole matter—what part of the sentence shall be given priority of emphasis? Roberts has no hesitancy in giving the verb the most prominent place in the sentence and his reasons are two: first, the verb is most difficult for the foreigner to learn, and, secondly, it is the part of speech which occurs oftenest. One may readily admit the difficulty of the verb but what connection is there between its difficulty and its importance as a part of speech? The second reason is equally unconvincing. Excepting the impersonal forms, of which there are but a few, a verb always presupposes the action of one thing upon another, or the relation of one thing to another. One would therefore think that nouns and pronouns would occur more frequently than verbs since there must be at least two terms for every single verb in a typical sentence or proposition.

But let us consider the pedagogy of emphasizing the verb on account of its excessive difficulty. Of all verbs perhaps the most difficult and the most frequently used are the auxiliary verbs "to have" and "to be". According to Roberts' theory these should be taught first. But here we must find great difficulty in conveying the meaning of these two verbs by gesture. Since they are not action verbs it is impossible to interpret them by actions. Roberts suggests that the im-

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 26.

agination of the teacher and of the pupil may be trusted to give the interpretation, but this is very doubtful in view of the different meanings which these two important verbs carry. Nor is it commonly regarded good pedagogy to give a beginner the hardest thing first. Interest is always indispensable if good teaching is to result. Yet how can interest be held if the learner becomes discouraged by his inability to understand the verb? If nouns and adjectives are more readily learned than other parts of speech, why not start with them, and gradually lead up to the more difficult parts, such as verbs? It would be just as unreasonable to try to teach electricity by starting with the dynamo because of its vast importance and the difficulty of understanding its operations; yet no teacher of science would for a moment consider such a procedure.

Roberts tells us that the "verb" is the "soul" of the sentence but he adduces no proof for his statement. In our discussion of the origin of language, the language of primitive peoples, the gesture-language of Indians and of deaf-mutes, considerable evidence was gathered to show that the "noun" and not the "verb" is the "soul" of language. There is also a practical reason why the noun is a better starting point than the verb. Although this will be elaborated further on, it may be mentioned in passing. Any interpretation of the verb demands either a teacher or a dictionary, whereas putting the noun first obviates this requirement in a measure. Up to the present writers of text-books for foreigners have taken no cognizance of the fact that a foreigner can teach himself if he is given the right kind of facilities. Only a very small proportion of adult foreigners will ever be reached by teachers, and yet it is very important that something should be done for those who cannot or will not enter a classroom. Roberts' method deliberately ties the learner to the teacher. The lessons are only

given out in leaflet form, lesson by lesson, and if a student misses several lessons it is very difficult for him to catch up, because his understanding must all come through the teacher's efforts. Roberts also suggests that objects be brought into the class-room, but this is obviously impossible in the case of many essential things which it would be difficult and cumbersome to provide. Tools, implements, and machines will indicate this difficulty which a serviceable method should be able to overcome.

The Roberts' method embraces five distinct steps in teaching a lesson: (1). The Oral Training; (2). The Reading Exercise; (3). The Writing Practice; (4). The Review; (5). The Grammar Lesson. For reading, the large charts are used and the attention of the class is thus concentrated upon each word. After reading comes writing. Now it is quite possible for the foreigner to have pronounced, to have read, and to have written whole sentences, and yet to have misinterpreted their meaning throughout. Against this danger Roberts' procedure supplies no adequate safeguard. To be sure, the Review Lesson now follows, but the student may have already learned a wrong meaning which is much more difficult to unlearn, than it would have been to learn the right meaning at the start, and everything depends upon the teacher's ability to interpret the sentences correctly by his gestures. Thus it is left to the teacher to determine by what means he can, whether his students have comprehended him or not.

Following the Review Lesson comes the Grammar Lesson. If this is properly taught we have no criticism to make of it; but if too many technical words are introduced grammar had far better be omitted until a later stage of instruction. In general teachers are apt to be over-anxious to teach correct English, rather than to afford a working knowledge of it. For

similar reasons, the learning of English sounds is apt to be a waste of time, which would be better employed in an imitative practice or drill in pronunciation; because English is not a phonetic language.

In conclusion our criticism of Robert's method would be that it is both pedagogically and genetically wrong in placing an undue emphasis upon the verb; that the stress put upon oral training is also psychologically unsound, since hearing is only one part of understanding; that the method depends too much upon the teacher's ability to interpret meanings through his own gestures and those of his students; that insufficient importance is attached to the foreigner's ability to learn something by himself; and finally that too wide an opportunity is given for misinterpretation. The good points of the method are the stress laid upon the use of English only in teaching the language; the preponderant use of verbs of the action type; the employment of objects whenever possible; and finally the close connection of the words and sentences with the foreigner's own personal experience. Many foreigners have been successfully taught with this method but that does not prove it to be either a correct or an acceptable method; because every real method, as Dewey says,<sup>1</sup> grows out of the subject-matter, and the ability of a teacher to put himself *en rapport* with his class. In so far as Roberts' teachers are good teachers, they will of course accomplish much with his method; yet with a better method they might be trusted to accomplish even more.

<sup>1</sup>Dewey, John: *Democracy and Education*. New York, 1916, p. 212.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A CRITICISM OF THE GOLDBERGER SYSTEM OF INSTRUCTION.

The method of teaching English to the foreign-born advocated by H. H. Goldberger is explained by him in a recent bulletin<sup>1</sup> issued by the U.S. Bureau of Education. Goldberger approves the Direct Method but his use of it may be criticized. In speaking of the "synthetic method" he says, "For a long time it was thought that a knowledge of a language could be 'built up' as we build a house or put up a piece of machinery by adding one part to another. . . . A word-method would use single isolated words to build phrases and sentences. In order to teach single words teachers resort to the device of pointing out objects and saying, 'This is a hat', 'This is a book'. Used occasionally to point out the meaning of a new word, 'This is a latch', the device is valuable, but, of course, no one ever learned to speak in this way."<sup>2</sup> To the last sentence we must take exception; for this is just the way in which a child does learn to speak; first he picks up the names of a few familiar objects, and if his curiosity is aroused, he proceeds to ask the names of various other articles that come within his experience. "One might know the meanings of all the words in the dictionary," continues Goldberger, "and be unable to put five of them together in a sentence."<sup>3</sup> Apparently Goldberger considers that one cannot know a word until he has used it in a sentence and that a word is of no value to one unless he is able to use it in a sentence. But

<sup>1</sup>Teaching English to the Foreign-born. H. H. Goldberger. U.S. Bureau of Education. Bulletin 80, 1919.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 5.



this seems to neglect the significance of the sentence-word, which, when expanded, will, of course, necessitate the employment of several words to form a grammatical sentence. Yet all interjections are sentence-words, and no one would deny that they express meaning. When a foreigner hears a jumble of sounds, they possess no meaning for him until he can particularize them so that they may indicate to him distinct objects or activities; they can therefore have but a vague meaning to him until he uses them in some situation to express a judgment. It is then that they acquire a fuller and more precise significance for him. The more explicit the judgment, the more definitely must his sentence-word be expanded into a proposition whose terms constitute a grammatical sentence. It is to this explication of meaning by the use of related words to which Goldberger refers. However, for the purpose of giving the foreigner a working-knowledge, the sentence-word has the greatest value at the outset of his instruction; for it provides the nucleus of every sentence that he may be taught to comprehend and make use of.

Goldberger employs an "analytic-synthetic" method of which he says: "In analytic methods the pupil begins not with an element—a letter or a word—but with a larger unit which is useful or interesting for its own sake. Thus the pupil may begin with a whole sentence or even a larger unit, a series of sentences about some topic or theme."<sup>1</sup>

But it is not apparent why Goldberger refuses to consider a "word" as "useful or interesting for its own sake". The importance of the sentence may be over-emphasized to the point that one forgets one of the fundamental laws of the English language, namely, the law of stress. When we meet a friend we do not say, "I wish you a good morning". We

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 15.

are more apt to say "morning". Stress<sup>1</sup> has had a tremendous influence upon the development of our language and when the "word" element is passed over as not "useful or interesting for its own sake", the law of stress is denied. For instance, note the evolution of the Gothic *we habai5e5un* which by successive stages has passed through—*we habaided*, *we hafode*, *we havde*, *we hadde*, *we had*, to *we'd*.

Both Goldberger and Roberts employ the verb as the nucleus in their method, and since they frankly rest their case upon the authority of Gouin, we shall next inquire into the principles of Gouin's method.

<sup>1</sup>Wright, Joseph: Old English Grammar, London, 1908, p. 13.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE GOUIN METHOD: THE "SERIES SYSTEM."

In 1880 François Gouin published "*L'art d'enseigner et d'étudier les langues*" which was translated the same year into English by H. Swan and V. Betis<sup>1</sup>. Charles Hart Hand-schin describes the method as follows: "Discontented with the inefficiency of the conventional methods of teaching languages, François Gouin invented the series-system, in which the conversations, or lessons, treat of a unified theme, such as: 'I open the door', or 'The maid pumps water'. Each lesson is written out in a series of sentences, each of which tells of an action. Gouin considered that in this way language-material can be more easily learned than otherwise, and he said he had learned the system by observing children in their talk."<sup>2</sup>

The method became popular in England, though it attracted less attention on the Continent. In 1892 W. T. Stead in the "Review of Reviews" gave an enthusiastic account of its use in the instruction of his own children. The method has had greater significance for its suggestiveness than in any other way, and in general it has received either a mild praise or has been ignored. Kron<sup>3</sup> in Germany tried to put it on a firm basis as a method of instruction but he later gave it up entirely. In America in 1898 the Committee of Twelve<sup>4</sup> said

<sup>1</sup>The Art of Teaching and Studying Languages by F. Gouin. Translated by S. Swan and V. Betis. London, 1880.

<sup>2</sup>The Gouin Series-System. *School Review*: 20, 1912, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup>Kron, R.: *Die Methode Gouin oder das Serien-System in Theorie und Praxis*. Marburg, 1900.

<sup>4</sup>Report of United States Commissioner of Education, 1897-98, pp. 1391-1433.

it deserved "serious attention" but did not recommend its adoption; so it has remained for Roberts and Goldberger to establish it in America as a method of teaching English to foreigners, long after it has been discarded in Europe.

So much for its history. Let us now turn to Gouin's book<sup>1</sup> in order to learn more exactly what his method is. He first gives us a very pathetic account of his attempt to learn German and of his return to Paris to find that in the meantime his little nephew had learned to speak French. Gouin then attempts to analyze the child's way of learning to talk and concludes that the child assimilates the mother-tongue sentence by sentence, and not word by word.<sup>2</sup> He says: "Finally, the child, going from act to act, articulated either aloud or softly to himself the expression of this act; and his expression was necessarily the verb. . . . How shall I trace what this revelation was to me? The verb! Why it was the soul of the sentence. The verb was the foundation upon which the child, little by little, built up his sentence. The verb was the germ from which, piece by piece, sprang and blossomed forth the sentence itself. The verb! This then, was the link by which the child attached sentence to sentence, perception to perception, conception to conception."<sup>3</sup> Further on we find: "The verb! The method which is based upon the verb is based in reality upon time. The German term 'Zeitwort' (time-word) is a whole chapter of psychology. In time and by time everything is in order, because everything in it is in order, because everything in it is successive, everything springs from something else. The method which rests upon the verb is therefore based upon a principle of order."<sup>4</sup>

Apparently Gouin's reason for choosing the verb as the

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., p. 46.

"soul" of the sentence is based upon two things:<sup>1</sup> his observation of a child going from one thing to another and the fact that the name for "verb" in German is "Zeitwort". It is very doubtful if the consciousness of the child is taken up with the "going" from one thing to another; it is more likely that what he is conscious of is the "one thing" and then the "other thing". Most of our actions quickly become unconscious, for this is a characteristic of habit formation. Indeed, the consciousness of an action is frequently a hindrance to its execution except for the "feel" of the act as regards its rhythm and the like. Furthermore, if the importance of the verb is indicated by its German name of "Zeitwort", why should not the noun be regarded as even more important, since the Germans call it the "Hauptwort" (chief-word)?

Continuing his argument Gouin writes: "This verb, which allows the sentence to fold itself up, to gather itself together, to contract itself, to force itself into one single term, afterward to expand itself to make all the various complements that it incloses spring forth—the verb plays in the sentence a part that is not without analogy with that of the heart in the human body."<sup>1</sup> But surely this statement pictures the value of the verb in fanciful terms; for it carries no real argument as to the value of the verb over that of the noun. Throughout Gouin's book he maintains that the verb is "the principal organism of speech, the living centre around which, in the phrase, gravitate all the nouns, whether subject or complement, with all their train of prepositions and adjectives."<sup>2</sup> Yet never does he give us a cogent reason for regarding the verb in any real sense as the 'soul' of the sentence.

Gouin's method of using the verb, which Goldberger accepts as psychological, is indeed just the opposite of psychological.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 283.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 67.

Gouin has his verbs arranged serially, for instance: "To chop a log of wood,—this is the end. What are the means employed? To chop wood we require a hatchet. Therefore, first of all:—She goes to seek a hatchet; then what does she do? she takes a log of wood; then what does she do . . . . The end is attained. The exercise is therefore finished: the theme is complete."<sup>1</sup> All these varied operations are to be pictured "mentally" by the pupils, and everything is to be taught the learner in this serial fashion.

Such a method is unpsychological because, in the first place, we do not think serially, and even if we did we would not all use the same series. Thinking depends upon a tendency for certain elements to be aroused in concert. When we try to think serially a premium is put upon the arousal of irrelevant associates which may become so prominent that the cogency of the series is destroyed and we experience what is termed a "flight of ideas". Gouin intends that his pupils' experiences should follow one another in an orderly manner, but if we do not stop to reason out our actions serially, it is quite impossible that this order should be maintained unless the elements of thought issue from a common source and have a unified direction. It is this unified direction which makes it possible to achieve the same end by a variety of means. In walking to the door—a very simple action—we may have to avoid a chair or a table; or pass in front of or behind people who may be present. Our actions—even the simplest—are combinations seldom repeated in precisely the same way. Yet Gouin seems to expect the student to anticipate and picture mentally all the varied movements that are necessary to any operation, though no two persons can ever think serially in precisely the same way, since no two people have had pre-

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 68.

cisely the same experiences. J. J. Findlay, in 1893, made a prophecy which has almost come true: "The reader, careful of posterity, will keep his Gouin; for fifty years hence it will be as much prized by the bibliographer of pedagogues as Dufief, and Marcel, and D'Arcy W. Thomson are now. I urge teachers to purchase this book, not only for the many grains of truth which the writer mixes in his chaff, but because the vigor and originality of his attack will force the language teacher to think for himself."<sup>1</sup>

Henry Sweet is more specific in his criticism of the method: "The Gouin method is a good instance of the 'interest-fallacy' . . . . Gouin fails to see that there is a wide difference between taking a lively interest in a novelty and being interested in the vocabulary connected with the object after it has ceased to be a novelty. Even while the child was playing at being a miller, its interests was not in the words, but in what the words expressed; the attitude of its mind was that of the absorbed novel-reader. We know how soon the child's mind tires of any one object of interest. Besides, all children are not equally interested in the construction of a mill, even when it is a novelty; and certainly some of the series, such as that which gives a detailed description of opening and shutting a door—"I walk toward the door; I approach the door; I approach nearer, I approach nearer still; I put out my arm; I take hold of the handle"—are as uninteresting as they are useless."<sup>2</sup>

"Thus, although repetition is essential", he continues, "there are some kinds of repetition which are so wearisome to the learner that they can hardly be used in teaching, in spite of certain advantages they possess. . . . It is strange that

<sup>1</sup>Reform in Modern Language Instruction. Educational Review 5, 1893, p. 334.

<sup>2</sup>Sweet, H.: Practical Study of Language, New York, 1900, pp. 113-114.

Gouin, who attaches so much importance to stimulating the pupils' interest in the subject matter, should advocate teaching the verb by means of such repetitions as these: "To-day the postman will come before we have breakfast—while we are at breakfast—after we have had breakfast. Yesterday the postman came before we had breakfast—to-morrow the postman will come before we have breakfast . . .". Such methods should only be used occasionally in the grammar; not made a standing feature of the method."<sup>1</sup>

Brekke remarks "the series-method results in the most astounding grammatical limitations: only principal sentences, verbs only in the first and third person, only assertive sentences (no interrogative or negative sentences), everything in the present tense and so on."<sup>2</sup> And yet Goldberger advocates just this method in his "English For Coming-Citizens".<sup>3</sup> Lesson Three consists of the following sentences: 'I go to the door; I turn the knob; I open the door; I walk into the room; I shut the door; I walk to my seat; I sit down'. In his 'Teaching English to the Foreign Born',<sup>4</sup> he recommends the Gouin procedure and indicates how great an influence it has exerted over him by the constant use of Gouin's stock phrases, such as "'end' worth while" and "series of sentences", etc.

A principle of Gouin which can be more highly commended is the emphasis placed upon the use of the ear<sup>5</sup> in learning a language, though here, too, we find the "truth mixed with some chaff," because though modern languages have often been taught almost entirely through the medium of the eye, Gouin goes to the other extreme when he declares that by his oral method "to learn to speak, no matter what language, is a

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>2</sup>Brekke, Gouin: Methode. Christiania, 1894, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Bureau of Education Bulletin No. 80, 1919, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup>Op. cit., p. 127.



thing as natural and easy to a child as learning to fly is to a bird."<sup>1</sup> If he had said as easy as a bird learning to fly with its feet uppermost after it had learned to fly in the usual fashion, we would have agreed with him, for what he has neglected is the difference between learning the mother tongue, and learning a second language when one already possesses the complicated speech pattern of a different language, which has a constant tendency to conflict with every acquisition in the new tongue. Roberts likewise falls into this fallacy when he would have us depend almost exclusively upon the ear. We have already dealt with this point in criticising the Roberts' method and therefore we need not go into it again. Handschin in discussing the use of the ear and the serial method says, "Gouin's principles cannot be adhered to, even if one should cut up the book and hand out the pages piecemeal."<sup>2</sup> And yet this is just what Roberts has done; for he cuts up the book and hands out leaflets of the lessons to be studied.

Delobel in his criticism of the Gouin method says: "M. Gouin cites the surprising results that he has obtained with young children learning French but he has neglected to take into account the fact that these children were in small numbers, and that they received one or two hours' lessons each day."<sup>3</sup> P. Passy, while he approves the practice of those who appeal to the childish imagination, observes that "we cannot follow them when they wish to make exclusive usage of mental pictures and reject the help of visible pictures, and the use of lessons on the object actually found in the room."<sup>4</sup>

Gouin's method of teaching foreign language has been

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 128.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 174.

<sup>3</sup>De la méthode directe dans l'enseignement des langues vivantes. Paris, 1899, p. 62.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

called the "Natural" or "Psychological" method—natural, because it appeals to the ear, and psychological, because it uses the serial order of verbs. It is evident from our criticism that both these terms are misnomers, yet they involve two important principles which have been widely used in the direct method of teaching modern languages. These two principles are: the use of spoken language, and the presentation of the subject-matter in a psychological manner. By psychological is meant the selection of subject-matter with which the learner is already cognizant and which he has a desire to learn in the new tongue.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE DIRECT METHOD OF TEACHING MODERN LANGUAGES.

The Direct Method of instruction in foreign languages is an eclectic method; it aims to use what is helpful in all methods, hence it claims that as many senses as possible should be appealed to, and that it is just as necessary to read as to speak. Naturally such an eclectic method must be slow in evolution, and it has been known under various names. We may here give a short history of it.

Like all methods derived from the practice of teaching foreign languages it did not evolve from the ideas of any one person<sup>1</sup>, but among those who seem to have had the most to do with its introduction, was Viëtor. In 1886 Viëtor wrote his epoch-making book<sup>2</sup> which threw down the gauntlet to the classical mode of teaching modern languages, by his strenuous objection to the declension—and word-methods of instruction. Gouin's method, although published in 1880, was not the method Viëtor had in mind, for as Delobel tells us: "Although (Gouin's) is not a translation method, it does not appear to be a real direct method, since the teacher always begins by indicating the French phrase and passes from one language to another by means of the verb."<sup>3</sup> Spencer states: "The fact that the (direct) method is often described as the 'Natural' method has given rise to serious misapprehension, which it may be well to remove from the outset. The reformer recog-

<sup>1</sup>Jespersen, Otto: *How to Teach a Foreign Language*. London, 1904, Translated by Bertelsen, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Viëtor, W.: *Der Sprachunterricht Muss Umkehren*. 3rd Edition, Leipzig, 1905.

<sup>3</sup>*De la méthode directe dans l'enseignement des langues vivantes*, p. 63.

nizes as fully as any of his critics the many and fundamental differences which exist between the conditions under which the child acquires his native tongue and those under which he proceeds at a later stage, to the acquirement of a second language."<sup>1</sup> This Direct Method, or as it was called in Germany, the Reform Method, took on two forms, although the principle remained the same. In Germany it became "Anschauungsunterricht", while elsewhere pictures were not used but objects were simply pointed out. The former or pictorial method has become the most successful, as we shall see. Miss Brebner, who made a study of modern language teaching in Germany, reports as follows:

"1. Reading forms the centre of instruction.

2. Grammar is taught inductively."<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps Berlitz represents the opposite way of using the direct method; for in the Preface to his book for teaching French he lays down three rules:

"1. Teaching of object lessons.

2. Teaching of associations of ideas.

3. Teaching of grammar by examples and demonstrations."<sup>3</sup>

Regarding the use of the Direct Method Bréal writes: "The teacher ought never to lose sight of the fact that the living languages ought to be taught; above all to be spoken. He will speak and make the pupils speak in the tongue that he teaches."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Krause states that: "The basic thought is not the dead letter but that the living word shall be in the foreground of the new language instruction."<sup>5</sup> and in another place he writes, "The direct method, or better, a direct method

<sup>1</sup>Spencer, F.: Aims and Practice of Teaching, Cambridge, 1897, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Brebner, Mary: Method of Teaching Modern Language in Germany. London, 1899, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Berlitz, M. D.: Premier Livre. Berlin, 1909.

<sup>4</sup>Bréal, M.: L'enseignement des langues vivantes. Paris, 1889.

<sup>5</sup>Krause, K. A.: Über die Reformmethode in Amerika. Marburg, 1914.

is not the old natural-conversation method which rightly fell into ill-repute because it had for its goal talking ability without cultural and disciplinary training. The direct method or the reform method is not the so-called psychological method either, since the latter is a part of the former. Nor is the so-called phonetic method identical with the reform method but again only part of it."<sup>1</sup> Charles M. Purin sums up the difference between the "natural method" and the "direct method" when he tells us that the former "(1) lacks the phonetic basis; (2) in its first stages makes no use of reading or writing but deals with conversation pure and simple; (3) postpones to a very late period statements of connected grammatical rules."<sup>2</sup>

We have pointed out some things that the direct method is not; it is time to state just what it is. Dawes puts the matter quite clearly when he says: "The second language should be taught by the natural or direct method." (Note, however, the confusion of terms.) . . . "The teacher must proceed intuitively and progressively. The basis of study will be the common vocabulary, and the principal lessons will be in all classes lessons of intuition, and in the use of the language. Three lessons will treat of notions familiar to the children, the family, furniture, clothes, etc. . . . The teacher must strive to put before the eyes of the pupils the objects of which he speaks, or representations of them by models or drawings; to grasp the verb the action must, if possible, be performed, for the adjective the method will be to show several objects which have a common quality."<sup>3</sup> In an article in the "Educational Review," Krause quotes Dr. W. H. D. Rouse of Perse School, Cambridge, as saying: "It is fortunately no longer needful to

<sup>1</sup>Educational Review: 45: 1913, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup>Modern Language Journal: 1:3. Nov. 1916, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup>Dawes, T. R.: Bilingual Teaching in Belgian Schools: Teachers' Guide published by the Commune of Brussels, Cambridge, 1902, p. 16.

defend the direct method of teaching languages; no one whose opinion is based on knowledge now attacks it, as long as the languages to be taught are modern."<sup>1</sup>

It can be gathered from the foregoing that the direct method is built upon the names of concrete objects, i.e., upon nouns. Nowhere does one find any mention of the verb as being the "soul" of the sentence. All agree with Walter Rippmann when he says: "It is important that the beginner should always have a new word spoken and utter it correctly before he sees its written form."<sup>2</sup> And yet Rippmann is insistent on the use of pictures as all his texts show. In Germany and in the United States, the Hölzel pictures of the four seasons have been used extensively, but as Bagster-Collins writes, "A possible objection to the Hölzel pictures, perhaps, is that they are too agricultural in character, especially for city children."<sup>3</sup> The greatest bone of contention seems to be the use of phonetics. Henry Sweet<sup>4</sup> advocates phonetics quite strongly. Bahlsen<sup>5</sup> would recommend their use for two weeks. Breul says: "As far as I see it at present and have been able to gather from the experiences of others, it is not necessary to introduce transcribed texts, excellent and indispensable, as no doubt they are, for students and teachers, into class teaching."<sup>6</sup> Rees in his preface to the Pictorial German Course is even more positive on this point: "The utter inadequacy of the Phonetic or imitative pronunciation method of representing strange sounds by strange combinations of symbols, has long struck the writer as being wearisome and ineffective, to say

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., 45: 1913, p. 241.

<sup>2</sup>Rippmann, Walter: *Hints on Teaching German*, London, 1906, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Bagster-Collins, E. W.: *German in Secondary Schools*, New York, 1904, p. 80.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit.

<sup>5</sup>Bahlsen, L.: *The Teaching of Modern Languages*. Translated by Evans, New York, 1905, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup>Breul, K. H.: *The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages*, Cambridge, 1899, p. 16.

the least.”<sup>1</sup> However, it is commonly agreed that all teachers should possess a knowledge of how the sounds are produced, so that students may be taught the position of tongue and other organs of speech in making articulate certain sounds otherwise unfamiliar to them. Widgery states the cases very well when he says, “Phonetics as such are not a school subject but the master must be a phonetician, and happily a little phonetics goes a long way.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus far we have discussed the “core” of language in the articulate speech of children and primitive men, and in the sign language of the deaf and dumb, and of the American Indians, finding that “core” in every case to be the noun. Our object has been to establish the principles of a suitable method for teaching English to adult foreigners with a minimum of time and effort. We have examined into the methods advocated by Roberts and Goldberger, who, following Gouin, have based their systems upon the verb, and evidence has been adduced to show that this method of teaching a foreign language has long been superseded by a Direct Method based upon the noun. We shall now present a method for teaching English to adult foreigners which is based upon the noun, defending it by the experience of educators who have used and advocated similar methods. We shall call our method “The Pictorial Method” though it is but an adaptation of the direct method designed to use the noun as the “core” into the class room; and so lessens the need both of a teacher of language. Our method dispenses with bringing objects and of a dictionary. In this way we are able to give the adult foreigner a means of learning the language by himself.

<sup>1</sup>Rees, David: Pictorial German Course. New York, 1909, Preface.

<sup>2</sup>Widgery, W. H.: The Teaching of Language in Schools. London. 2nd Edition, 1903, p. 20.

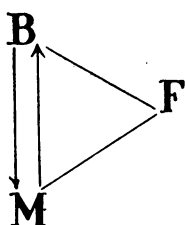
## CHAPTER IX.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PICTORIAL METHOD.

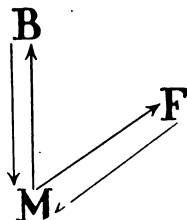
The chief emphasis of the method is placed upon the noun.

Every object is illustrated and is an object well-known and frequently used by the average foreigner.

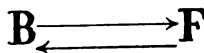
In building up our system we must keep in mind the fact that at the start we have no linguistic point of contact with our class, consisting as it does of adult foreigners who do not know a word of our language, nor do we understand a word of theirs. Yet we are on common ground when we look together at a picture of some familiar object, for each of us knows what it is in his own language, and when we point to the picture of a table the foreign equivalent will come into the mind of the learner as readily as the word "table" comes to us. Our task then is to get the learner to associate this object with its English name. Franke<sup>1</sup> illustrates this graphically as follows: •



(1)



(2)



(3)

Note: In what follows we shall have frequent occasion to make reference to a book<sup>2</sup> recently published in Canada by the National Council of The Young Men's Christian Association which sets forth this pictorial method.

<sup>1</sup>Franke, F.: *Praktische Spracherlernung*, Leipzig, 1896, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Reaman, G. E.: *English for New Canadians*, Toronto, 1919.



B is the English word; M is the foreign equivalent and F is the thing it stands for. At first, (1) translation must be made and both words connected with the object. Then (2) after the new association has been formed the meaning also attaches to the English word as a synonym; and finally (3) the English word is connected directly with the thing it stands for. Franke further states: "So far as it is possible, we strive to start from the idea and, indeed, we are always successful when we can re-establish the idea by a picture which, according to the psychological law of substitution, calls up in the place of it in our minds an existing picture of the idea, and immediately takes over those tendencies of reproduction. Thereafter for all practical purposes, without hesitation, it can be taken as the equivalent itself for the idea."<sup>1</sup>

Another very good reason for using pictures is given by P. Passy: "In the first place one must speak of things that the child well understands—familiar things. The time will come when the foreign language will become the *means* of learning new things, but for the moment it is only an *end*, and in order to attain this end it is necessary to place ourselves on ground already solid. The objects which are under the eyes of the pupils form the best basis of operations, by the aid of a few gestures one is almost sure to be understood in speaking of the class room, of the school furniture, of the children themselves, of the human body, of clothing. This series of objects exhausted, one can have recourse to objects brought in by the teacher, and then to pictures."<sup>2</sup>

It is observed that Passy only advocates the use of pictures when objects are not available. So long as the pictures to which he refers are not especially prepared for the lessons, it is perhaps better to use concrete objects, but when we have

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit. p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>De la méthode de directe dans l'enseignement des langues vivantes, p. 38.

pictures especially chosen to illustrate the objects, there is an advantage in having them represented in their natural surroundings which can not always be done with the objects at hand. Besides it is not always convenient to bring in certain objects whose names it is very necessary to know. "The reasons for using pictures in elementary language instruction may be stated as follows," says John A. Hess: "In the first place the points of association are greatly increased. . . . But it is, I believe, perfectly obvious that the student will longer remember the expression 'der Hund' when he has seen the picture, heard the teacher's voice, pronounced the word himself, and last of all seen the word and recorded it in his notebook; for he has exercised his eyes, his ears, his organs of speech and the muscles involved in writing, and accordingly has the four-fold association in his brain centres."<sup>1</sup>

Bagster-Collins indicates his agreement with this when he advocates: "1. Conversation based upon objects in the class room and vicinity; later, maps and pictures.

"2. Conversation based upon the reading book.

"A discussion of the first kind carries with it also a short discussion of the Anschauungsprincip. As applied to the teaching of modern languages, this system, i.e., the showing of objects, models, pictures, the use of gestures, mimicry, and the association of the corresponding foreign words, has long been regarded as a valuable factor in the teaching of languages. It was thought, and the view is still held by many, that by the direct appeal to the sense of sight and the simultaneous naming of the object, a direct association is formed between the object and the new foreign symbol . . . it is certainly true that, this kind of instruction makes the association between the object and the new symbol quicker and surer."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Modern Language Journal, Vol. 1:8, May, 1917, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 75.

"Moreover", he continues, "Anschauungsunterricht gives the teacher and class something definite to talk about, and something capable of developing along various lines, grammatical as well as subject-matter. The exercises can be made interesting to both young and old, for although the objects in the class room, and those represented in the various pictures, are very well-known, the fact that the pupils are learning their names brings in an important element of freshness into the instruction. Besides this the pupil is kept interested because he is conscious of his growing power. The work is simple and he feels he can do it, that the teacher is not expecting the impossible of him. The pupil gains confidence, and hence it is not difficult to get him to talk, to ask questions as well as to answer them.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Brebner describes the procedure as follows: "The earliest instruction generally takes the form of talk on objects in the school room, on matters connected with the pupils' daily life, and on colored pictures representing everyday scenes."<sup>2</sup> Thus we are in accord with these authorities when we show our pupils the pictures of objects well-known to them and of frequent usage, and so far at least the method may be accepted as psychologically sound.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 4.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PRECEDENCE OF THE CONCRETE OVER THE ABSTRACT.

No nouns are used in our method that are not illustrated, hence no abstract nouns are included.

Ladd and Woodworth state that: "Psychologically considered a percept may be, and indeed must be abstract, since every percept isolates some feature of a thing or situation and for the moment neglects the other features."<sup>1</sup> Now percepts are sensations that bear meaning, so if we can give the foreigner such sensations as have meaning we can trust him to make his own abstractions. For instance, straightness and crookedness are abstractions from seeing straight and crooked lines, and every abstraction must have a concrete basis in sense perception. Thus by our illustrations we are affording a basis for abstractions. Witness what Lüttge says: "But 'Anschauung' is not simply a placing before the senses, there is also an inward contemplation which is not bound to the sense perception of the thing and something previously contemplated is renewed with perceptible truth and reality before the spiritual eye."<sup>2</sup> Walter Rippman asks the question: "How are pupils to be taught the meaning of new words if the mother tongue is not to be used? . . . . . Cannot this problem be solved by the use of pictures? The early vocabulary of the learner will consist to a large extent of words denoting concrete things of everyday occurrence, and the most suitable pictures are those which present simple scenes . . . with such

<sup>1</sup>Ladd, G. F. & Woodworth, R. S.: *Elements of Physiological Psychology*. Revised Edition. New York, 1911, p. 596.

<sup>2</sup>Lüttge, E.: *Beiträge zur Theorie und Praxis des deutschen Sprachunterrichts*. Leipzig, 1899, p. 29.

pictures before us, containing persons who are not merely types, but individuals, we do not speak vaguely about abstractions, but vividly about men and women, boys and girls. . . . Sometimes gesture may help.”<sup>1</sup>

We have avoided the use of abstract nouns in order that we might prevent a situation arising which would demand the use of the mother tongue. If the teacher did not know the foreign word for “truth” he would have considerable difficulty in explaining it, and such situations are embarrassing both to teacher and pupil. Therefore, in elementary instruction no abstract nouns are used until the end of the course when something of the meaning of citizenship is taught. With this subject-matter a few abstract nouns are unavoidable. In defense of this limitation of the method let it be kept clearly in mind that the method is intended only to give the foreigner a working knowledge of English; not to teach him linguistics, hence, very few abstract nouns are required. To quote Judd: “All this has been expressed by certain psychologists in the statement that general ideas are in essence nothing but dispositions toward activity. . . . There are undoubtedly direct motor habits and consequent attitudes in connection with many concrete words. It is, on the other hand, probably not true that the bodily attitude assumed when we think of the word ‘animal’ is anything like a complete bodily attitude such as would be assumed in the presence of animals in concrete experience. The mental attitude aroused by the word probably has as its direct physiological parallel a bodily movement which is a much reduced resultant of earlier direct attributes.”<sup>2</sup>

If the above is true it affords us another argument in favor of pictorial representations; for next to having the objects

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Judd, C. H.: *Psychology*, New York, 1907, p. 235.

actually before one, their pictorial representation is the most satisfactory. When the word "phonograph" is heard while the hearer is looking at a picture of the instrument, bodily attitudes will be aroused in accordance with such associations as the individual may have had with the phonograph. Since the presence of emotion tends to increase the possibility of reviving the idea accompanying the emotion, the more vivid or emotionally colored is the foreigner's experience, the more likely he is to remember all the things connected therewith. Thus pictures may be used as an aid to memory because they tend to make the experience of learning more vivid, both attentional and emotional.

"If now we choose as our illustration not words of direction but abstract phrases such as the phrases by which men are exhorted to patriotism," writes Judd, "obviously the emotional stirring which one feels as the result of these exhortations is by no means adequate to explain the true significance of the word 'patriotism' . . . the abstract word taken alone is the expression of a relation. If it is treated as a final factor of experience, it will dissipate itself in vague emotional reaction."<sup>1</sup> Hence in attempting to enhance "the emotional stirring", to use Judd's term, we can explain<sup>2</sup> "citizenship" with the aid of concrete pictures of a naturalization paper, of a polling booth, or of any other situation of civic duty which may touch a responsive chord in the foreigner's past experience.

It is very important that all nouns should be illustrated so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding and in this respect civic duties and their abstract names are of course more difficult to picture than tools or other concrete objects. In our criticism of the Roberts' method we pointed out that

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 236.

<sup>2</sup>Reaman, G. E.: Op. cit., pp. 70-78.

the success of the method depends very largely upon the ability of the teachers to explain the words by gesture and that there was great danger of the teacher's gestures being misunderstood. The use of appropriate pictures for each object employed prevents such a misunderstanding from arising and although this confines us to the use of concrete terms, there is, as Judd remarks, "a disadvantage in the use of abstract terms in that two individuals, while they may start with the same general tendency of attention, may, in the course of the use of words, drift apart, without being as clearly conscious of their divergence from each other as they would be if they dealt constantly with concrete percepts. It is a much more definite method of interchanging ideas to demonstrate the objects themselves, or to demonstrate some concrete representations of the objects, such as pictures or models. If one does not have pictures or models, he naturally tries to correct the errors which are likely to creep in when he is using words, calling up from time to time as concrete an image in the mind of his listener as it is possible to evoke by the use of words. We all of us feel the relief in any continued discourse when a figure of speech, or an illustration is used."<sup>1</sup> The foregoing substantiates our principle of teaching adult foreigners by concrete nouns only. In teaching certain qualities of things, demonstrations are possible, as in the case of colors, where a color plate representing twelve common colors may be introduced.<sup>2</sup>

But apart from any other value that pictures may have, it is well known that foreigners are very fond of pictures and their bunk-houses are frequently covered with clippings from illustrated newspapers. That is one of their ways of learning the language by themselves when one of their number chances

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 238.

<sup>2</sup>Reaman, Op. cit., p. 11.

to have some knowledge of English. It is good pedagogy to make use of a method which the foreigner himself finds natural, and pictures at once enlist his interest; for as Hess puts it, "the best reason for the use of pictures in the classroom is the increased interest of the students."<sup>1</sup> "Memory depends also on attention" writes Sweet, "and this partly on the interest taken in the subject. All sound principles of linguistic study tell us that we ought to begin with the expression of those ideas and circumstances which are most familiar to us, or will be so when we have acquired that language."<sup>2</sup>

Hence for the employment of concrete visual percepts of interesting and significant objects, we have both psychological and pedagogical grounds. In the first place pictures stimulate the foreigner's interest—he participates actively in their perception—and, secondly, a vivid and emotional context tends to be aroused to give the associations a stronger and more lasting effectiveness.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 308.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 112.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE USE OF NUMBERS.

Each object pictured in our plan will be found in its natural surroundings. On it or near it appears a number, and the same number at the bottom of page gives the English name of the object.

Learning is a process of establishing relations among perceptions, and whatever objects are associated in consciousness have a tendency to be revived together. Hence in teaching it is always best to have things taught in their natural setting. Thus pictures often have an advantage over the objects themselves when brought into the class-room; for many of the objects needed are out of place in the class-room, whereas, in a picture they can be shown in their natural surroundings where one thing will tend to recall another. Flagstad states that there is a certain unity about a picture which appeals to the mind, and the study of a picture constitutes a real experience.<sup>1</sup>

For the use of the number we have Rees' word: "The Direct Method demands a teacher, and no book can pretend to do for the learner what a teacher can do. . . . therefore the author has not hesitated to modify the Direct Method to the extent necessary to make the work intelligible to the private student. After long experience of the use of pictures as a means of suggesting subjects for conversation, the author makes no apology for their introduction to an extent not before attempted in books for older scholars, and in order that no

<sup>1</sup>Flagstad, Chr.: *Psychologie der Sprachpädagogik*. Leipzig, 1913, p. 328.

unnecessary aid should be relied upon, the names of the objects are detached and numbers substituted.”<sup>1</sup> The specific use of the words for numbers is mentioned later on.

Breul writes that “As the object of modern teaching is in my opinion to teach not only the foreign language but at the same time by means of it, the principal features of the life and character of a foreign nation, it follows that the material for reading should be carefully chosen. . . .”<sup>2</sup> Something of this unity can be secured by the pictorial method, for there is great advantage in connecting the appearance of the English name with the object for which it stands. The sound can be associated with the letters which form the sound, as well as with the object which the word symbolizes, and, as Laudenbach writes: “Sounds learned in connection with the objects or activities which they represent, form the basis of language.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., Preface.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., pp. 29-30.

<sup>3</sup>De la méthode directe dans l'enseignement des langues vivantes, p. 4.

## CHAPTER XII.

### BUILDING THE SENTENCE.

On the page opposite each set of pictures in our text, may be found phrases, and sentence-work that is based upon the illustrations. Practically all the verbs used are action words and no attempt is made to teach the niceties of language.

If the foreigner knows the names of the chief objects of his experience, he can be trusted to make himself understood. To be sure he should likewise learn to put his words in sentence form, for without this, he will have little freedom in the use of the language. But experience has shown that words once learned can be put into sentences without a great deal of difficulty.<sup>1</sup> In our text each set of illustrations is placed opposite a corresponding set of sentences that describe the pictures. The first lesson of the course deals with the definite and indefinite articles, used with nouns and prepositions, the meaning of the preposition being given with the aid of gestures. The verbs employed in our system are in most cases action verbs, which makes it relatively easy for the teacher to illustrate them by gestures. "Personally I have found pictures particularly beneficial in all sorts of drills on verb forms," writes Hess . . . "with a little exercise of the imagination it is quite possible to use pictures for verb drills, often for verbs which in class could not be acted out in a concrete way".<sup>2</sup> Our pictures are also helpful in making clear the mean-

<sup>1</sup>Anderson, J. T. M.: *The Education of the New-Canadian*, Toronto, 1918, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 308.

ing of verbs for the illustrations suggest many forms of action. In speaking of instruction in German, Bagster-Collins expresses the opinion that the procedure of "beginning with the noun and teaching as much of the verb as is necessary, is preferable. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Since the first thing that foreigners seem to learn in English is to count, we suggest making use of number words at the start; for as Spencer writes: "The early introduction of numerals provides a plentiful variety of short sentences which will do much to establish correct pronunciation and sentence intonation."<sup>2</sup>

Grammar should be worked into the study very carefully and slowly. As grammar it need not be taught at all; for few of us speak correctly because we can analyze and parse. The teaching of formal grammar is being discouraged in our elementary schools and the foreigner may in a large measure be taught correct forms without technical reason for them. Since a working knowledge is all that we seek to provide by this method, we have excluded the word "shall". English people often confuse the usage of "shall" and "will", and it does not seem necessary to make a serious point of it with the foreigner. Indeed the niceties of language are not germane to the problem of the adult foreigner learning English, for to quote Bagster-Collins again: "It is an open question whether one can ever become absolutely bilingual, whether it is possible to command equal mastery of two sets of symbols to express one's ideas. At any rate close approximation would take years of the most strenuous application under the most favorable circumstances. Even the large majority would never accomplish it, in fact only the most gifted."<sup>3</sup> If this be true, we are more than justified in avoiding the niceties of linguistic usage in our attempt to give a working-knowledge of English to the foreigner.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 111.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 16.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PARALLELISM AND CONTRAST.

Like things are paralleled in treatment, while unlike things are contrasted. The sentences are short with constant repetition of the same words.

When we parallel like things and contrast unlike we are employing two kinds of relations involved in thinking—similarity and difference. Other types of relations are used in various connections. For instance we have emphasized particularity by our insistence on the associative attachment of the name to the object. Whenever we ask that the learner associate the name of an object with a particular object for which it stands, we are demanding that he particularize and thereby establish the relation between the symbol and the thing it stands for. By continuing to particularize, the relations of similarity and difference are established and throughout our scheme equality and identity enter conspicuously, especially in the comparison of numbers, in the recognition of objects pictured and in the recognition of familiar words. The five relations involved in thinking referred to above are spoken of by Ogden<sup>2</sup> in his *Introduction to General Psychology*. They are also implied by Henry Sweet when he gives the following as his chief principles of association.

“1. Present the most frequent and necessary elements first.

2. Present like and like together.

<sup>2</sup>Ogden, R. M.: *An Introduction to General Psychology*, New York, 1914, pp. 92-93.

3. Contrast like with unlike till all sense of effort in the transition ceases.
4. Let the associations be as definite as possible.
5. Let the associations be direct and concrete, not indirect and abstract.
6. Avoid conflicting associations.”<sup>1</sup>

The reason for having the sentences short is obvious. To anyone hearing a sentence for the first time it is but a jumble of sounds. There is no cognizance of the different words; for instance. “That is a box” is likely to sound as “That’s-a-box”. The longer the sentence the more difficult it is to pronounce, hence on the principle of facility we should begin with short sentences after providing for an appropriate association of ideas. The next problem is how to retain these associations in memory. It is generally agreed that repetition is one of the chief factors in mental retention. Sweet says: “Repetition is essential both for forming associations and retaining them in memory.”<sup>2</sup> “How words once met with are to be fixed in the memory has already been stated—by repetition, writes Walter Rippman”<sup>3</sup> and Gertrude E. Krause says that “When a new word is used in the class room it should be repeated a number of times before it is written on the blackboard.”<sup>4</sup>

Certainly if the words are to be impressed on our memory they must be repeated time after time, and it follows that the foreigner will be encouraged in his task every time he comes upon a word he has seen before, for each time he meets it, it becomes more familiar to him.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., pp. 105-108.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 110.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>4</sup>A Study of Vocabulary. School Review '08, p. 112.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE EYE VERSUS THE DICTIONARY.

The eye takes the place of the dictionary in the Pictorial Method.

The pictures selected are such as will appeal to every nationality alike; for instance, the illustration of a table may be counted upon to represent the idea "table" to any foreigner, and his interest can not but be aroused to know its English name. A comparison of numbers affords him this information; at least he will see the word, and many people remember what they see better than what they hear. If the word is also pronounced for him, and repeated by him, the correlation of sight, sound and articulation is established and all three impressions are associated as aids to the word's remembrance.

Many books for teaching English to foreigners append a vocabulary list in several languages, but this may be regarded a weakness of method, because when we use vocabularies all our learning takes place through the mother tongue.<sup>1</sup> Besides, one can not easily provide a vocabulary list adequate to all the different languages that may be represented in a single class of foreign students. The use of a vocabulary also presupposes that the foreigner can read his own language, which, though generally true, is not always so. The use of a dictionary, if one is provided for each student, is often a tedious hindrance to progress because it takes so long to look up words and one often forgets their context before the right equivalent can be found. Comparison by numbers immediately gives the same result or even a better result; for in dictionaries several

<sup>1</sup>Franke, *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

synonyms are usually given, among which the learner must make a choice, whereas the pictorial method chooses the word for the learner.

Sweet<sup>1</sup> has objected to the pictorial method because the objects pictured may be misunderstood. This objection can be anticipated in our method; for whenever a number refers to the whole object rather than to a part of it, the circle can be filled in black.<sup>2</sup> This idea should, of course, be carried throughout the book, and great care must be taken to prevent misunderstandings by having the numbers designate very definitely the object to which they belong.

"Since the significance of perception for our mental life consists in making us understand the world which surrounds us, it is evident that the role of sensation is typically the most important one in the complex. It is the starting point for our interpretation, and if we perceive correctly, we must depend largely upon the sensory data which are offered."<sup>3</sup> For this reason the correlation of impressions made upon the ear and the eye, together with the sensory experiences of articulation are of great importance in learning a language, since no one of these modes of impression is indispensable to linguistic training, and if one of them is imperfect—as is not infrequently the case—a good method should not be built upon either sight, sound or pronunciation alone. Yet Roberts depends entirely, and Goldberger very largely upon the ear. "What appears valuable in 'Anschauungsunterricht' it seems to us, is the following," writes Flagstad, "The sound of the word is connected with a clear, outstanding embodiment of the concept, and the things and examples form a certain association in the picture which is helpful to the memory

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>2</sup>Reaman, Op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Ogden, Op. cit., p. 131.



and also to the speech details. Accordingly it happens that certain things acquire greater meaning through the picture than is possible by any other means; for instance, the meaning of prepositions, the showing of local situations such as colors and shapes."<sup>1</sup> W. D. Hewey asks: "What then is the purpose of oral practice? It is to train the ear and tongue coincidently with the eye, to make the foreign language a thing of life, not a record of 'lifeless letters implanted on our brain' unspoken, forgotten like the covered characters of an ancient palimpsest"<sup>2</sup> while Franke tells us:

"Thus the child learns language by speaking and indeed not only through the ear but with all the sense organs though of quite special significance is the sense of sight.<sup>3</sup> He continues: "If we consider once more for a short time the main instances of learning language naturally, we have to emphasize the fact that language was learned to start with as a form of thought; that all the senses, especially the sense of sight, played an exceptional part in it; that the formation of laws went on unconsciously; that the learning of language went on within a language; and that finally it has only the spoken language (more restricted—the tribal speech) for the object."<sup>4</sup>

Wundt<sup>5</sup> in his discussion of the speech centers of the brain gives us further reasons for using the eye, voice, and hand as simultaneously as possible so that when the word is heard, the object and its English name are seen, the word is pronounced, and written, thus establishing associative connections between all these sensory impressions.

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 330.

<sup>2</sup>Modern Language Journal 1:3 Dec., 1916, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>5</sup>Wundt, W.: *Grundzüge der Physiologischen Psychologie*. 6th Edition. Leipzig, 1908-11, pp. 306 ff.

## CHAPTER XV.

### AN ECONOMICAL METHOD.

We started out to find a method which would give foreigners a working knowledge of English with a minimum of time and effort, and the Pictorial Method seems to satisfy these requirements. Though we have no figure as to the exact percentage of foreigners who are literate, some workers claim as high a percentage as eighty. For those who read, our method can be most readily used, because of the close association between the English word and its meaning. Many foreigners learn English from illustrated newspapers and it is but a step from the newspaper to the pictorial method. Economy of effort here derives from the fact that the foreigners are already familiar with this kind of method. The average foreigner is likewise surrounded at all times by signs and directions which teach him in a similar manner.

Economy of time and effort is also gained in not having to bring objects into the class-room, since the pictures provided represent all the necessary objects in their natural surroundings. Objects are also illustrated whose names foreigners should know, and which could not easily be brought into a class-room.

Time is saved in not having to refer to the dictionary. When the word first appears in the sentence-work it can be put in heavy type with the same number following it that designates it in the illustration. Hence recourse to the mother-tongue is often unnecessary and conflicting associations are

thus avoided. To quote Bahlsen: "In an important work he (Viëtor) showed with what profit and success pictures may be used in teaching, how excellently they are adapted to impel children to speak and to convey to them the materials of the foreign language without mediation of the mother-tongue."<sup>1</sup> "The use of pictures involves a great saving of time," writes Hess. "Who cannot by a single glance at an object or its picture gain a much more real and adequate conception of it than by reading the most detailed description of it?"<sup>2</sup>

The direct method of purely verbal and gestural instruction is fatiguing to the teacher because of the great amount of talking and acting that is necessary. The pictorial method saves the teacher because less talking and fewer gestures are needed in pointing out a picture. "The very use of the direct method," says Davis, "increases the fatigue of the teacher. Every teacher who has tried the method as well as everybody that has attended the recitation, either as a student or as a visitor, is aware of this fact. There is fatigue for the teacher because a greater expense of energy purely physical is a conspicuous feature of the direct method."<sup>3</sup>

Economy of effort is further indicated by the use of large charts and lantern slides which can be made of these illustrations in order that large classes may be taught from them. When away from the class the learner has a replica of the chart or slide from which he was taught and a glance at the illustration in his book will tend to revive the lesson in his memory and thus facilitate its review.

The pictorial method also provides the foreigner with a means of learning by himself. Most foreigners desire to learn the English language, and since they are constantly surround-

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 308.

<sup>3</sup>Davis, H. C. E.: *The Direct Method in French Secondary Schools*. School Review '08, p. 124.

ed by printed English, it is almost as important for them to read English as to speak it. The pictorial method is useful in reading because the learner has the names of the common objects so that he can learn them as word-images. When he sees the word-images on a sign board or newspaper his mind readily pictures the object for which they stand, and thus his familiarity with the word is increased. Many foreigners, anxious to learn English, never come in contact with teachers. With the aid of the pictorial method and a phonograph much can be accomplished without a teacher. When foreigners congregate—at cafés, or homes—the pictorial method supplemented by the use of a phonograph and records of appropriate words and phrases, will enable groups of them to make progress in learning English without a teacher. They would have before them the English word; their eyes would tell them what it stood for; and from the phonograph record their ear would give them the pronunciation. "The effectiveness of the 'automatic professor' lies in the parallel action of spoken and written word, both eye and ear receiving the impression at the same time, so that the memory retains the form of the printed word accompanied by its sound."<sup>1</sup> The pictorial method goes one step farther in that the eye gives the meaning of the word as well as its form. Rees says of this method: "Although mainly written for class-work, this modification (the use of numbers) makes the work especially suitable for learners studying without a teacher. . . . For those who are unable to obtain the services of a native teacher the author has consistently advocated the use of the phonograph as the best means, and the fact that thousands of phonographic records are now being used by private students, and even by teachers, for their improvement of the pronunciation

<sup>1</sup> Scientific American: '09, p. 287.

proves the utility of this mechanical device.”<sup>1</sup> No foreigner can become a foreman in any industrial establishment unless he knows some English. Economy of time and increase of efficiency would follow if industrial plants would provide their non-English speaking laborers with a set of pictures showing the various machines used in the plant labelled as our method indicates with the English name for each important part and operation. In this way the foreigner would more readily acquire the knowledge of English which is necessary if he is to rise in the industrial world and in addition, as Bruel suggests for his model reader, there should be “good clear maps . . . . . tables of foreign measures, weights and moneys . . . . . ordinary letters.”<sup>3</sup>

Our first inquiry was directed upon the “core” of language which we found to be the noun. Yet two popular methods now used in teaching English to foreigners are based upon the verb as the “soul” of the sentence. We have analyzed the verb method, have described its genesis, and pointed out its weaknesses. From a broader point of view it appears that the most approved method of teaching foreign languages, in general, is the so-called “*Anschauungsunterricht*”. We have therefore chosen an adaptation of this method which we have called the “Pictorial Method”, as being the one best suited to our purpose. This new method has been described and each step in its development traced. Since both with reference to the origin of language and to the language of the deaf and dumb, the noun appears as the most significant part of speech, we have proceeded to build a practical method for teaching English to adult foreigners upon this foundation. The method may claim to be psychologically sound, since it starts

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., Preface.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., pp. 80-93.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 82.

with the foreigner's common interests and for instruction in the new tongue it employs the method which he himself uses in his own personal attempts to learn English. The method is one that appeals at once to both sight and hearing while it suggests a coordination of all the sensory data involved in linguistic apprehension and expression by emphasizing them almost simultaneously. The method is logical in that it begins with words as "sentence-words" and then expands them by explication into complete sentence forms.

The method may claim to be pedagogically sound, since it not only appeals to the interest of the foreigner, but gives him at once a means of learning by himself, thus emancipating him to a considerable extent both from a teacher and from the not altogether beneficial use of the dictionary. By use of the pictorial method the adult foreigner should therefore be able to achieve a working-knowledge of English with a minimum of time and effort.

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